

Abstract 136

TITLE: An Evaluation of an Integrative HIV Prevention Education Model for Latinas.

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ISSUE: Despite the over-representation of Latinas in the AIDS epidemic, traditional HIV/AIDS prevention programs are often designed to provide standard HIV/AIDS information to participants such as transmission through sexual practices and IV drug use. Most prevention programs lack an analysis of race, class and gender as it relates to high risk practices.

SETTING: The "Mujer es Salud" program is an HIV/AIDS integrated prevention education model targeted to Latinas, developed and implemented by Congreso de Latinos Unidos, a multicultural social service organization in North Philadelphia.

PROJECT: The model "Mujer es Salud" is premised on the belief that HIV risk behavior must be understood in relation to the wider economic, social, and cultural barriers that Latinas experience. Therefore, the program is designed to integrate HIV education with a wide range of services that target their broader needs. By examining the ways in which race, class and gender inequalities affect Latina's high risk behavior practices, the study aimed to gain a better understanding of the complex interrelated factors that contribute to the spread of HIV among Latinas.

RESULTS: The study evaluated the strengths and weaknesses of the model, via in depth interviews of the participants who showed an increase level of knowledge in HIV prevention and were connected to other services that facilitated HIV high risk behavior modification and the implementation of health prevention practices. The study also identified other barriers that Latina's experience when practicing HIV prevention.

LESSONS LEARNED: There is a need for HIV prevention education targeted to Latinas in North Philadelphia to be implemented within the framework of the social, economic and cultural realities of their daily lives.

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